

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT
523 EAST CAPITOL AVENUE
PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA 57501-3182

Kinship Home Studies

PROPOSALS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN 03/30/16, 5:00 pm CDT

RFP #:547

BUYER:
Division of Child Protection
Services

POC:
Mark Close
Mark.Close@state.sd.us

READ CAREFULLY

FIRM NAME: _____ AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ TYPE OR PRINT NAME: _____

CITY/STATE: _____ TELEPHONE NO: _____

ZIP (9 DIGIT): _____ FAX NO: _____

FEDERAL TAX ID#: _____ E-MAIL: _____

PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION

CONTACT NAME: _____ TELEPHONE NO: _____

FAX NO: _____ E-MAIL: _____

1.0 **GENERAL INFORMATION**

1.1 **PURPOSE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**

The purpose of this request for proposal is to select an offeror to complete home studies of kinship families for children in the custody and/or care of the Department of Social Services. The request for proposal also includes the completion of kinship home studies for children in the custody of other states seeking placement with kinship families in South Dakota through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC). The offeror will utilize the Department of Social Services home study process to assess the kinship family's ability to provide a safe and stable placement for the child.

1.2 **ISSUING OFFICE AND RFP REFERENCE NUMBER**

The Department of Social Services is the issuing office for this document and all subsequent addenda relating to it, on behalf of the State of South Dakota, Division of Child Protection Services. The reference number for the transaction is RFP #547. Refer to this number on all proposals, correspondence, and documentation relating to the RFP.

Please refer to the Department of Social Services website link <http://dss.sd.gov/keyresources/rfp.aspx> for the RFP, any related questions/answers, changes to schedule of activities, amendments, etc.

1.3 **LETTER OF INTENT**

All interested offerors are requested to submit a non-binding **Letter of Intent** to respond to this RFP. While preferred, a Letter of Intent is not mandatory to submit a proposal.

The letter of intent must be received by email in the Department of Social Services by no later than 02/16/16 and must be addressed to Mark Close at Mark.Close@state.sd.us. Place the following, exactly as written, in the subject line of your email: **Letter of Intent for RFP #547**. Be sure to reference the RFP number in any attached letter or document.

1.4 **SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

RFP Publication	<u>02/01/16</u>
Letter of Intent to Respond Due	<u>02/16/16</u>
Deadline for Submission of Written Inquiries	<u>02/19/16</u>
Responses to Offeror Questions	<u>02/29/16</u>
Proposal Submission	<u>03/30/16</u>
Oral Presentations/discussions (if required)	<u>To Be Announced if Needed</u>
Deadline for Completion of Site Visits (if required)	<u>To Be Announced if Needed</u>
Proposal Revisions (if required)	<u>To Be Announced if Needed</u>
Anticipated Award Decision/Contract Negotiation	<u>04/29/16</u>

1.5 **SUBMITTING YOUR PROPOSAL**

All proposals must be completed and received in the Department of Social Services by the date and time indicated in the Schedule of Activities.

Proposals received after the deadline will be late and ineligible for consideration.

An original, and five (5) identical copies, and one (1) digital copy loaded on a USB flashdrive of the proposal shall be submitted.

All proposals must be signed in ink by an officer of the responder legally authorized to bind the responder to the proposal, and sealed in the form intended by the respondent. Proposals that are not properly signed may be rejected. The sealed envelope must be marked with the appropriate RFP Number and Title. The words "Sealed Proposal Enclosed" must be prominently denoted on the outside of the shipping container. **Proposals must be addressed and labeled as follows:**

Request For Proposal #547 Proposal Due 03/25/16
South Dakota Department of Social Services
Attention: Mark Close
700 Governors Drive
Pierre SD 57501-2291

No punctuation is used in the address. The above address as displayed should be the only information in the address field.

No proposal may be accepted from, or any contract or purchase order awarded to any person, firm or corporation that is in arrears upon any obligations to the State of South Dakota, or that otherwise may be deemed irresponsible or unreliable by the State of South Dakota.

1.6 CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION – LOWER TIER COVERED TRANSACTIONS

By signing and submitting this proposal, the offeror certifies that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation, by any Federal department or agency, from transactions involving the use of Federal funds. Where the offeror is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, the bidder shall attach an explanation to their offer.

1.7 NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The State of South Dakota requires that all contractors, vendors, and suppliers doing business with any State agency, department, or institution, provide a statement of non-discrimination. By signing and submitting their proposal, the offeror certifies they do not discriminate in their employment practices with regard to race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, ancestry, national origin or disability.

1.8 MODIFICATION OR WITHDRAWAL OF PROPOSALS

Proposals may be modified or withdrawn by the offeror prior to the established due date and time.

No oral, telephonic, telegraphic or facsimile responses or modifications to informal, formal bids, or Request for Proposals will be considered.

1.9 OFFEROR INQUIRIES

Offerors may email inquiries concerning this RFP to obtain clarification of requirements. No inquiries will be accepted after 02/19/16. Email inquiries must be sent to Mark.Close@state.sd.us with the following wording, exactly as written, in the subject line: **RFP # 547 Questions**.

The Department of Social Services will respond to offerors inquiries by posting the offeror aggregated questions and Department responses on the DSS website at <http://dss.sd.gov/keyresources/rfp.aspx> no later than 02/26/16. Offerors may not rely on any other statements, either of a written or oral nature, that alter any specification or other term or condition of this RFP. Offerors will be notified in the same manner as indicated above regarding any modifications to this RFP.

1.10 PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

The proposal of the successful offeror(s) becomes public information. Proprietary information can be protected under limited circumstances such as client lists and non-public financial statements. Pricing and service elements are not considered proprietary. An entire proposal may not be marked as proprietary. Offerors must clearly identify in the Executive Summary and mark in the body of the proposal any specific proprietary information they are requesting to be protected. The Executive Summary must contain specific justification explaining why the information is to be protected. Proposals may be reviewed and evaluated by any person at the discretion of the State. All materials submitted become the property of the State of South Dakota and may be returned only at the State's option.

1.11 LENGTH OF CONTRACT

The contract resulting from this RFP will be issued for a period of one (1) year, June 1, 2016 to May 31, 2017, with the option for renewal for up to four (4), one (1) year contracts at the discretion of the State of South Dakota. The laws of South Dakota shall govern this transaction.

1.12 GOVERNING LAW

Venue for any and all legal action regarding or arising out of the transaction covered herein shall be solely in Hughes County, State of South Dakota. The laws of South Dakota shall govern this transaction.

1.13 DISCUSSIONS WITH OFFERORS (ORAL PRESENTATION/NEGOTIATIONS)

An oral presentation by an offeror to clarify a proposal may be required at the sole discretion of the State. However, the State may award a contract based on the initial proposals received without discussion with the offeror. If oral presentations are required, they will be scheduled after the submission of proposals. Oral presentations will be made at the offeror's expense.

This process is a Request for Proposal/Competitive Negotiation process. Each Proposal shall be evaluated, and each respondent shall be available for negotiation meetings at the State's request. The State reserves the right to negotiate on any and/or all components of every proposal submitted. From the time the proposals are submitted until the formal award of a contract, each proposal is considered a working document and as such, will be kept confidential. The negotiation discussions will also be held as confidential until such time as the award is completed.

2.0 STANDARD AGREEMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Any contract or agreement resulting from this RFP will include the State's standard terms and conditions as seen in Attachment A.

3.0 SCOPE OF WORK

The Department of Social Services vision is Strong Families – South Dakota's Foundation and Our Future. The purpose of the Division of Child Protection Services is to assure children's safety, permanency and well-being. The goal of Child Protection Services is to maintain children's safety in their homes and when not possible, children may need either a temporary or permanent alternative family setting. Whenever possible, and when in the best interest of a child, either in an initial, on-going or permanent placement, relatives must be considered for placement before any other placement. South Dakota has a relative preference law, SDCL 26-7A-19, which mandates placement preference to a qualified relative.

Kinship care is defined as the continuous care provided for a child requiring out-of-home placement in the home of a relative. The practice of relatives or "Kin" parenting children when their birth parents cannot is a time-honored tradition in most cultures. Within the child welfare system, children have the right to be with people they know, provided they will be safe and it is in their best interest. Relative placements assure children will have connections to their families and be a part of their culture.

3.1 Kinship Home Studies

- 3.1.1 Describe in the proposal the offerors philosophy regarding kinship care.
- 3.1.2 During Fiscal Year 2015, Child Protection Services referred approximately 224 families for kinship home studies, with approximately 192 families completing the home study process. Describe in the proposal how the offeror will complete kinship home studies within each of the seven (7) Child Protection Services Regions within 30 days of receiving the home study request. **(See Attachment B – Child Protection Services Map)**
- 3.1.3 *Often times families can be reluctant to complete a home study because they feel they shouldn't have to go through the home study process because they are family.* Describe how the offeror will work with families to complete the home study process in a timely manner. Describe family engagement techniques to be used by the offeror. Child Protection Services will provide letter templates to be used by the offeror for correspondence with prospective kinship providers. Changes to the letter templates must have prior approval from Child Protection Services.
- 3.1.4 The selected offeror will be expected to complete home studies on kinship applicants using the Kinship Home Study document provided by Child Protection Services. Affirm acknowledgment or provide comments in the proposal. **(See Attachment C – Kinship Home Study Document).**
- 3.1.5 Describe in the proposal what types of information are important in assessing a prospective kinship provider in order to make a recommendation to assist Child Protection Services in making a decision regarding approval of the kinship applicant.
- 3.1.6 **Exchange of Information:** Describe in the proposal how the exchange of information will occur between Child Protection Services and the offeror regarding each kinship applicant throughout the process.
- 3.1.7 **Monitoring and Evaluation:**
 - 3.1.7.1 Describe in the proposal what process will be utilized to monitor the consistency and quality of Kinship Home Studies completed by the offeror's assigned staff to include but not limited to the following:
 - Grammar/Speilling
 - Content to include analysis of information
 - Assurances that diligent and appropriate contacts have been made to gather information to support the offeror's assessment of the kinship family and obtain and clarity on questions/concerns
 - Valid References

- Central Registry Records Check

3.1.7.2 Describe in the proposal what process will be utilized to manage the program and evaluate the performance of the offeror's staff assigned to complete the work.

3.1.8 The offeror will complete the Inquiry Process in FACIS, documenting data such as Inquiry Type, Inquiry Date, Source, Inquiry Actions and documenting when notification letters are sent and when phone calls are made. Affirm acknowledgment or provide comments in your proposal.

3.2 Kinship Reporting Requirement

The offeror must affirm acknowledgment or provide comments in their proposal for the following reporting requirements.

The selected offeror will be expected to submit a Quarterly and End of the Year Report to Child Protection Services State Office with the following information:

- Number of kinship applicants referred to the offeror each month during the quarter and total number at the end of the year.
- Name, race and outcome for each kinship referral to include the following;
 - Completed the process
 - No response from applicant
 - Agency withdrawal and reasons for withdrawal
 - Client withdrawal and reasons for withdrawal
 - Non compliant
- If time between the referral and completion date for in-state referrals is over 30 calendar days or ICPC referrals is over 45 calendar days, provide an explanation why.
- Strengths and areas for development regarding the kinship study process.
- Detailed report of expenditures for the quarter and the amount left in the grant agreement.

3.3 Assurances for Program Responsibilities

The selected offeror must provide assurances for each of the following program responsibilities and expectations in their proposal and provide copies of policy and procedure materials upon request:

- Confidentiality of Child Protection Services information.
- Financial management, including management of multiple funding sources, separate from all other agency funding. Financial income vs. expenditure reports must be submitted on a quarterly basis to the State. An outside accounting firm may be used to meet this requirement.
- Allow Child Protection Services to review all financial records related to the grant upon request.
- Sound personnel and administrative policies and practices are in place for employees that include an employee manual addressing policies such as sick and annual leave, work adjust hours, overtime, employee review process and expense reimbursement requests.
- Each employee is aware of mandatory child abuse and neglect reporting requirements.
- Communicate with Child Protection Services via phone conference and/or face to face review of home studies referred and completed as well as address issues or concerns related to kinship home studies on a monthly basis.
- Give credit to Child Protection Services for its funding support on all press releases, reports, brochures, and other related materials by the offeror. Provide Child Protection Services with draft materials for approval.

- Provide telephone service, voice messaging service, e-mail access, internet access, and a general agency e-mail address.

3.4 Organization Qualities and Characteristics

The successful offeror will have the following organization qualities and characteristics: Describe in your proposal how you meet or exceed each of these points.

- A history of providing high quality training and consultation at the community level
- A philosophical comment and demonstrated experience in collaboration and partnership with DSS
- An administrative structure capable of efficiently managing statewide consultant staff as well as subcontracts where necessary.
- Demonstrated leadership capability and orientation to developing services in collaboration with DSS and/or other provider agencies as well as making changes to services provided as the needs of the State continue to change.
- A strong commitment to address cultural diversity.
- A history of demonstrated effectiveness in subcontract management and/or lead agency coordination of multiple providers. As well as a description of how challenging issues were addressed within those contracts.

3.5 Outcomes

The offeror must affirm acknowledgment and describe, as needed, in their proposal how they will address and meet each of the following bulleted expected outcomes.

System outcomes to be accomplished within the context of this contract:

- Increase the number of kinship families available for placement of their relatives
- Complete kinship home studies within 30 calendar days of in-state requests and within 45 calendar days of ICPC requests.
- Increase public recognition of the valued role of kinship families within the child welfare system on an area and statewide basis.
- A description of needed resources, both personnel and non-personnel needed to perform all activities on the RFP.

4.0 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND COMPANY QUALIFICATIONS

- 4.1 The offeror is cautioned that it is the offeror's sole responsibility to submit information related to the evaluation categories and that the State of South Dakota is under no obligation to solicit such information if it is not included with the proposal. The offeror's failure to submit such information may cause an adverse impact on the evaluation of the proposal.
- 4.2 **Offeror's Contacts:** Offerors and their agents (including subcontractors, employees, consultants, or anyone else acting on their behalf) must direct all of their questions or comments regarding the RFP, the evaluation, etc. to the point of contact of the buyer of record indicated on the first page of this RFP. Offerors and their agents may not contact any state employee other than the buyer of record regarding any of these matters during the solicitation and evaluation process. Inappropriate contacts are grounds for suspension and/or exclusion from specific procurements. Offerors and their agents who have questions regarding this matter should contact the buyer of record.
- 4.3 The offeror **MUST** submit a copy of their most recent independently audited financial statements.
- 4.4 Provide the following information related to at least three previous and current service/contracts performed by the offeror's organization which are similar to the requirements of this RFP, if the offeror is not currently

contracted with the Department of Social Services. Provide this information for any service/contract that has been terminated, expired or not renewed in the past three years:

- a. Name, address and telephone number of client/contracting agency and a representative of that agency who may be contacted for verification of all information submitted;
 - b. Dates of the service/contract; and
 - c. A brief, written description of the specific prior services performed and requirements thereof.
- 4.5 The offeror must submit information that demonstrates their availability and familiarity with the locale in which the project (s) are to be implemented.
- 4.6 The offeror must detail examples that document their ability and proven history in handling special project constraints.
- 4.7 If an offeror's proposal is not accepted by the State, the proposal will not be reviewed/evaluated.

5.0 PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORMAT

5.1 An original and five (5) copies shall be submitted.

- 5.1.1 In addition, the offeror must submit one (1) copy of their entire proposal, including all attachments and cost proposal, in PDF electronic format loaded on a USB flashdrive. Offerors may not send the electronically formatted copy of their proposal via email.
- 5.1.2 The proposal should be page numbered and should have an index and/or a table of contents referencing the appropriate page number.

5.2 All proposals must be organized and tabbed with labels for the following headings:

- 5.2.1 **RFP Form.** The State's Request for Proposal form completed and signed.
- 5.2.2 **Executive Summary.** A one or two page executive summary is to briefly describe the offeror's proposal. This summary should highlight the major features of the proposal. It must indicate any requirements that cannot be met by the offeror. The reader should be able to determine the essence of the proposal by reading the executive summary. Proprietary information requests should be identified in this section.
- 5.2.3 **Detailed Response.** This section should constitute the major portion of the proposal and must contain at least the following information:
 - 5.2.3.1 A complete narrative of the offeror's assessment of the work to be performed, the offeror's ability and approach, and the resources necessary to fulfill the requirements. This should demonstrate the offeror's understanding of the desired overall performance expectations.
 - 5.2.3.2 A specific point-by-point response, in the order listed, to each requirement in the RFP as detailed in Sections 3 and 4. The response should identify each requirement being addressed as enumerated in the RFP.
 - 5.2.3.3 A clear description of any options or alternatives proposed.
- 5.2.4 **Cost Proposal.** Cost will be evaluated independently from the technical proposal. Offerors may submit multiple cost proposals. All costs related to the provision of the required services must be included in each cost proposal offered.

The cost proposal must be submitted in a separate sealed envelope labeled "Cost Proposal".

See section 7.0 for more information related to the cost proposal.

6.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS

- 6.1 After determining that a proposal satisfies the mandatory requirements stated in the Request for Proposal, the evaluator(s) shall use subjective judgment in conducting a comparative assessment of the proposal by considering each of the following criteria listed in order of importance:
 - 6.1.1 Specialized expertise, capabilities, and technical competence as demonstrated by the proposed approach and methodology to meet the project requirements;
 - 6.1.2 Resources available to perform the work, including any specialized services, within the specified time limits for the project;
 - 6.1.3 Record of past performance, including price and cost data from previous projects, quality of work, ability to meet schedules, cost control, and contract administration;
 - 6.1.4 Proposed project management techniques;
 - 6.1.5 Availability to the project locale;
 - 6.1.6 Familiarity with the project locale;
 - 6.1.7 Cost proposal, and
 - 6.1.8 Ability and proven history in handling special project constraints.
- 6.2 Experience and reliability of the offeror's organization are considered subjectively in the evaluation process. Therefore, the offeror is advised to submit any information which documents successful and reliable experience in past performances, especially those performances related to the requirements of this RFP.
- 6.3 The qualifications of the personnel proposed by the offeror to perform the requirements of this RFP, whether from the offeror's organization or from a proposed subcontractor, will be subjectively evaluated. Therefore, the offeror should submit detailed information related to the experience and qualifications, including education and training, of proposed personnel.
- 6.4 The State reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive technicalities, and make award(s) as deemed to be in the best interest of the State of South Dakota.
- 6.5 **Award:** The requesting agency and the highest ranked offeror shall mutually discuss and refine the scope of services for the project and shall negotiate terms, including compensation and performance schedule.
 - 6.5.1 If the agency and the highest ranked offeror are unable for any reason to negotiate a contract at a compensation level that is reasonable and fair to the agency, the agency shall, either orally or in writing, terminate negotiations with the contractor. The agency may then negotiate with the next highest ranked contractor.
 - 6.5.2 The negotiation process may continue through successive offerors, according to agency ranking, until an agreement is reached or the agency terminates the contracting process.

7.0 COST PROPOSAL

The offeror should submit their proposal for the allocation of various expenses associated with providing services to the State within the scope of their proposal. This proposal should include all costs associated with employee salaries and benefits, for direct and indirect care staff, insurance vehicle costs, facility rent/lease/maintenance cost, office supply costs, utilities, professional fees and contract services and any other expenses that are deemed necessary to perform the services outlined in this proposal. **(See Attachment D – Cost Proposal Spreadsheet)**